



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
November 26, 2008

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT, RIO GRANDE FLOOD CONTROL LEVEES, MEXICAN WATER PROJECT ON AGENDA FOR DECEMBER 4 PUBLIC MEETING

Stormwater management in Las Cruces and rehabilitation of Rio Grande flood control levees will be discussed at an upcoming public meeting of the Rio Grande Citizens' Forum of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC). The meeting will take place at 6:30 p.m. on December 4 at the Corbett Center Student Union Ballroom at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, New Mexico. The purpose of the forum is to promote the exchange of information between the USIBWC and the community about the Commission's projects and related activities in the region.

Peter Bennett of the City of Las Cruces will give a presentation about stormwater management in the City and requirements under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit. In compliance with the provisions of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and the authority of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the General Permit sets forth conditions and requirements for small municipal separate storm sewer systems to discharge pollutants to waters of the United States. Mr. Bennet will also discuss the current status of the City's efforts to develop and implement its Stormwater Management Program.

USIBWC personnel will present the latest information about efforts to raise and rehabilitate Rio Grande flood control levees in the region. USIBWC crews have already begun construction on the east levee in the Mesilla Valley and work is scheduled begin in El Paso's Upper Valley in the near future. Improvements include making the levees taller, where needed, to conform to flood control standards established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency as well as undertaking structural

improvements in areas where the material originally used to construct the levees over 60 years ago may not provide long-term reliability.

In other business, representatives from the Municipal Water and Sanitation Commission of Ciudad Juarez will provide information about a Mexican aqueduct to convey water from the Mesilla Bolson aquifer to the urban area of Juarez. The Mesilla Bolson is a transboundary aquifer in the Paso del Norte region.

Also on the agenda, staff from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will discuss the U.S.-Mexico Border Environmental Program, known as Border 2012, as it relates to water issues in the Paso del Norte Region. Border 2012 is a collaboration between the United States and Mexico to improve the environment and protect the health of people living along the border. Border 2012 takes a “bottom-up” approach with stakeholder involvement to address the environmental and public health needs of the border region.

The Rio Grande Citizens' Forum was established by the USIBWC in 1999 to facilitate the exchange of information regarding USIBWC activities on the Rio Grande between Percha Dam, New Mexico and Fort Quitman, Texas. It is designed to bring together community members, enabling the early and continued two-way flow of information, concerns, values, and needs between USIBWC and the general public, environmentalists, irrigation districts, municipalities, and others interested in the river.

For more information:

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RIO GRANDE CITIZENS' FORUM
Thursday, December 4, 2008
6:30 - 8:30 P.M.
Corbett Center Student Union – Ballroom
New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, NM

AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions – Conrad Keyes, USIBWC, Citizens' Forum Co-Chair
- Stormwater Management for Phase II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer – Peter Bennett, Sr. Engineering Technician, City of Las Cruces, Public Works, Engineering Services
- U.S.-Mexico Border Environmental Program: Mid-term Review and its Application on Water-Related Issues in the Paso del Norte – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency staff
- Aqueduct Project for the Mesilla Bolson Aquifer in Mexico – Municipal Water and Sanitation Board of Ciudad Juarez
- Update on Rio Grande Levee Rehabilitation in Doña Ana and El Paso Counties – USIBWC Staff
- Public Comment
- Board Discussion
- Suggested Future Agenda Items

If you have a disability that you wish to self-identify confidentially that requires accommodation, please advise us ahead of time. For more information, call 915-832-4175 or e-mail sallyspener@ibwc.gov